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CONVERSAZIONE AND ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BELFAST

Government School of Design,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 1ST APRIL, 1852.

WITH AN

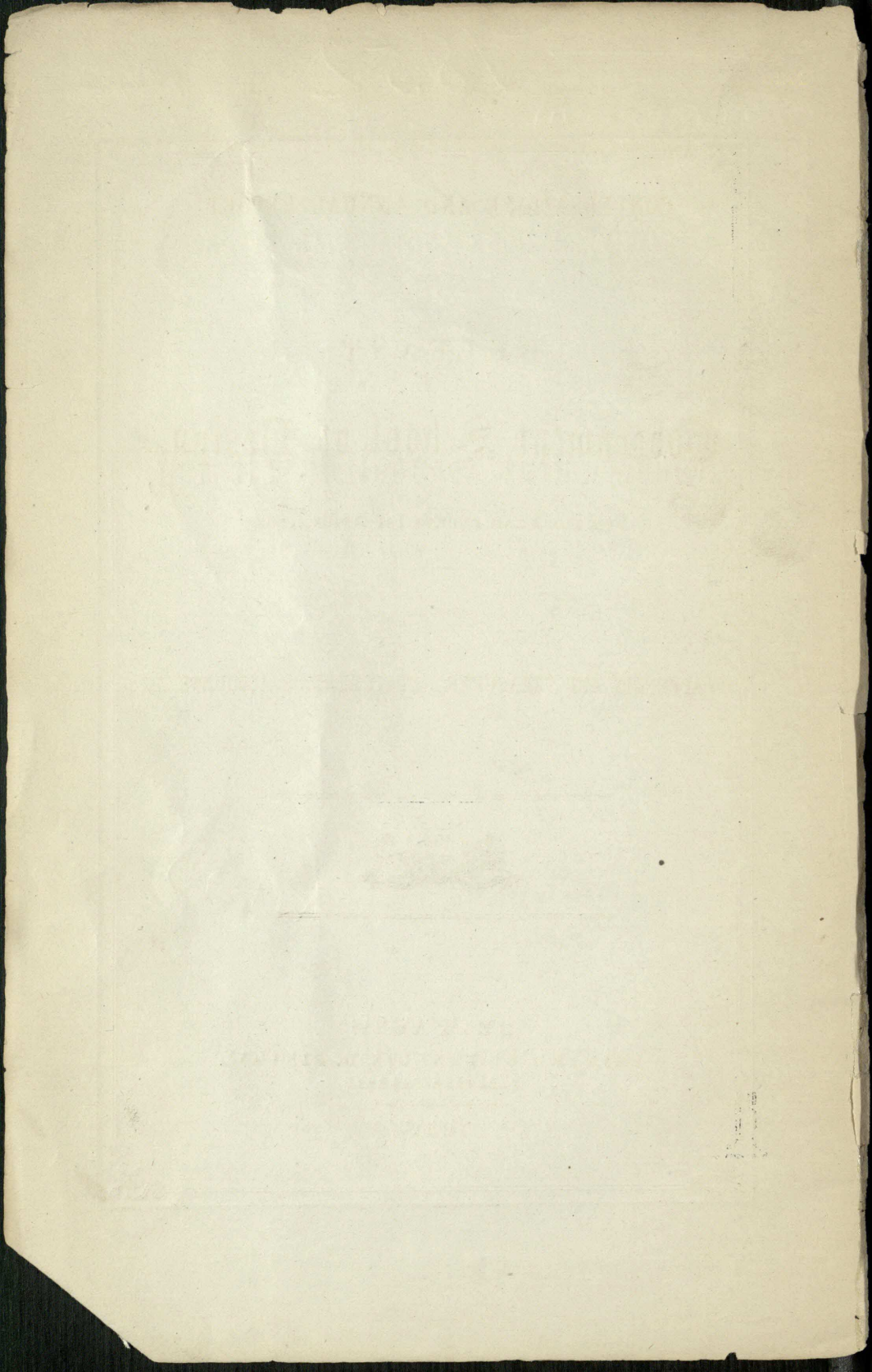
APPENDIX AND TREASURER'S STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS.



BELFAST:

PRINTED BY FRANCIS D. FINLAY,
CALENDER-STREET.

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CONVERSATIONS AND ANNUAL REPORT
OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1852.

WELLESLEY

AND CHURCH AND CLASSROOM

Government School of Design

VICE-PRESIDENTS

AND CHURCH AND CLASSROOM

AND CHURCH AND CLASSROOM

COMMITTEE

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

WELLESLEY

PRINTED BY FRANCIS D. KILPATRICK

CLARENCE STREET

1852.

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28.8.96

OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1852.

PRESIDENT:

LORD DUFFERIN AND CLANDEBOYE.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

THE EARL OF BELFAST.
R. B. B. HOUSTON.
SIR J. EMERSON TENNENT.

S. K. MULHOLLAND.
S. G. FENTON, MAYOR.
CHARLES LANYON.

COMMITTEE:

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THOMAS ANDREWS, M.D.
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‡ JOHN TAYLOR.
W. R. TRACY.
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ROBERT WORKMAN, JUN.

‡ *Members of the Managing Committee.*

W. J. C. ALLEN,	<i>Treasurer.</i>
JAMES MACADAM, JUN.,	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Hon. Secretary.</i>
SAMUEL VANCE,	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Secretary.</i>
C. L. NURSEY,	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Head Master.</i>
D. W. RAIMBACH,	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Second Master.</i>

CONVERSAZIONE AND ANNUAL REPORT, &c.

THE annual meeting and *conversazione* of the Belfast Government School of Design, and distribution of prizes, took place on the evening of 26th March. A very large concourse of persons, of both sexes, was attracted to the Institution; and during portions of the evening, the place was inconveniently crowded. At half-past seven o'clock, the visitors began to arrive; and at eight, the assembly-room was filled almost to excess with a highly fashionable assemblage of ladies and gentlemen from the town and surrounding neighbourhood. Among those present we observed Lord Dufferin, the Earl of Belfast, the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor and Dromore, Conway Richard Dobbs, Esq., William Coates, Esq., William J. C. Allen, Esq., James Kennedy, Esq., Clandeboy; J. F. Ferguson, Esq., Colonel Brough and the Officers of the 81st Regiment, John Mulholland, Esq., George C. Hyndman, Esq., Captain May, Rockport; Francis M'Cracken, Esq., Perceval Maxwell, Esq., Groomsport; Thomas Verner, Esq., James Heron, Esq., William Verner, Esq., John Holden, Esq., Henry Harrison, Esq., John Harrison, Esq., Osborne Grimshaw, Esq., Rev. Mr. Flood, Holywood; Robert Thomson, Esq., John Herdman, Esq., John Young, Esq., W. C. M'Cartney, Esq., John Hitchcock, Esq., Rev. R. W. Bland, Thomas Batt, Esq., Francis Smith, Esq., Thomas Greg Esq., William S. Crawford Esq., jun., Dr. M'Gee, William Finlay, Esq., Charles Lanyon, Esq., Robert Magee, Esq., Samuel Vance, Esq., Joseph Young, Esq., George S. Hill, Esq., Sub-Inspector, R. B. B. Houston, Esq., &c., &c.

On the motion of the Bishop of Down and Connor, and carried with acclamation, Lord Dufferin was called to the chair.

LORD DUFFERIN then rose amid applause, and addressed the assembly as follows:—Ladies and gentlemen, I assure you it is with the greatest and most sincere pleasure that I find myself

called upon again to address you, on a subject which, I trust, is one of mutual interest, and which I am happy to think we can now very fairly consider as one of mutual congratulation. On the last occasion that I had the honour of occupying the chair, at a meeting similar to this, it was for the purpose of inaugurating the establishment of this Institution. Myself and the other gentlemen of the Committee then appeared before you to advocate its claims for your encouragement and assistance. Our language was the language of promise, of hope, and expectation. We endeavoured to set before you the advantages we thought likely to result from the undertaking we had commenced, and which we ventured to recommend to your consideration. We stated the ends we had in view, the means by which we hoped to bring them about, and the manner in which your co-operation might be useful. Well aware that we had an audience of business-like men to appeal to, we endeavoured, and I am glad to think successfully endeavoured, to set forth, in distinct array, the practical and material advantages likely to result from the establishment of a school of art in the midst of a great manufacturing district. We explained in what manner art might become the handmaiden of manufacture. We promised the linen merchant, the damask manufacturer, the paper-stainer, the muslin embroiderer, that we would enable him to supply himself, from among his own townsmen, and in his immediate neighbourhood, with those patterns and designs necessary to his trade, which, hitherto, he had been compelled to seek at considerable expense in other countries. We said that we would make him independent of those countries, and enable him to compete with those who were his rivals, if not his superiors, only in consequence of the advantages they possessed in the command of a better style of ornamentation. Not only, however, were we to furnish him with better designs, but we were to educate the workman whom he employed in executing those designs, so that from mere machines performing they knew not what, they should become intelligent artisans, with a feeling for the work they were engaged upon, and, consequently, capable of performing it with that indescribable grace which alone can give to it the character of an artistic production. Alluding more particularly to one peculiar branch of manufacture in this town—I mean the linen trade—we ventured to suggest that, with a

little instruction, it would be quite practicable to enable the locality itself to supply the linen headings necessary to the disposal of these goods, and for the purchase of which, from France, a sum, I believe, of more than £60,000 is annually expended. And, finally, reserving our last appeal for the most influential portion of the community, we ventured to remind the ladies that we were their very humble servants; that we were excessively solicitous about their peculiar interests; and that there was nothing we had so much at heart as to place at their disposal a more exquisite array of those various articles, to which I shall not more particularly refer, but which they know so well how to use, in exercising that salutary supremacy with which Providence, for reasons—the wisdom of which will, doubtless, hereafter appear—has invested them over those who sometimes vainly venture to style themselves the lords of the creation. By-the-bye, gentlemen, I cannot resist taking advantage of this opportunity, even though it be treading on very delicate ground, to beseech the fairer portion of this audience to be content with what they have got—to be satisfied with the supremacy they have achieved, and possessing as they do the substance of power, to hesitate before they array themselves in what, after all, are but the outward badges of a dominion long since surrendered to them by the wearers. Fain would I respectfully, but earnestly, entreat them not to listen to those sirens, who, I have been given to understand, have lately appeared in the streets of this town from out the waves of the Atlantic. Sirens I may well call them, for they end below very differently from the way they begin—

“Turpiter atras

Desinat in [*braccas*] mulier formosa superne;”

and with eloquence, and, I am told, a success which I cannot hope to rival, have attempted to persuade the ladies to adopt that article, or rather those articles which hitherto have only been occupied by the ruder sex, and practically illustrated by their apparel that balance of marital influences which hitherto was supposed only to have been, as it were, metaphorically alluded to in a certain proverb, too well known to need that I should repeat it. (Laughter.) Having thus, then, set forth the manner in which we thought art might be found beneficial in con-

nexion with manufactures, we proceeded to state that the objects of such institutions as these did not confine themselves here ; but that it was also intended that every facility should be afforded to all classes of the community for obtaining a complete æsthetic education. Such, ladies and gentlemen, is a short summary of the expectations we held out at the inaugural meeting of this Institution—such was the character of the observations upon which our appeal was founded, an appeal which, I am glad to say, was not made in vain. With that heartiness and liberality which characterise the inhabitants of this town, and which make it a real pleasure to be connected with them in any undertaking of social improvement in this locality, the support upon which we relied was effectually and immediately granted. (Hear.) Subscriptions poured in in abundance, our promises were believed, our views were cordially accepted, and in a very few hours the Committee had the satisfaction of feeling assured, that the Institution for the success of which they had become responsible would not merely drag out that languishing existence which, by some fatality, seems always to seize upon any establishment transplanted into an Irish soil, but that it possessed within itself vital energies, independent of extraneous support—that the school could stand upon its own merits, and that it could be successfully carried on—a great distinction in this country—without constant dependence on Government assistance, and constantly clamouring for Government money. Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot resist the temptation of reading to you an extract from an official return, which will shew more forcibly than anything else with what liberality we have been met. It appears that in the year ending June, 1851, upwards of £400 was collected in local subscriptions, in support of this school. In Dublin, with more than twice the population, during the same period, £78 ; in Cork, little more than £100. Now, let us turn to England. In Manchester, only £300 ; in Birmingham, not £300 ; and in Sheffield and Glasgow the sum collected was under £250. In these last four places the Government grant was greater than that allowed to ourselves. In Paisley, only £22 was subscribed. Thus, we received twice as much in voluntary contributions as the average amount subscribed in all these places ; and we have done more than any of them towards com-

plying with the conditions upon which the Government grant was assigned to us. Now, I confess that this result is, in my opinion, very satisfactory. That we, an Irish community, could shew the slightest approach to making good our pecuniary engagements with the Government is in itself such an extraordinary phenomenon in this country that we may well be proud of it. But that Belfast should so completely surpass Birmingham, Manchester, and Glasgow in the aid voluntarily afforded to such an undertaking is, at all events, a satisfactory proof that in this part of the country we are not behind other people in our endeavour after social improvement. Such, then, being the measure of encouragement we have hitherto received, it remains to be shewn in what manner we have taken advantage of it—how far we have fulfilled our promises, and realised the expectations we were bold enough to hold out. Now, I do not intend, at this period of the evening, troubling you with any statistical details relative to the present condition and past progress of the school during the bygone year. Mr. Nursey, to whose exertions, intelligence, and talent we are indebted for the satisfactory result, will furnish us with a detailed statement of the facts connected with the Institution. I am sure that if we had not had the benefit of Mr. Nursey's exertions, of his talents, and of his advice, we would not be standing in the favourable position we are at the present moment. But I cannot resist the temptation of quoting an extract from the report of the Government Inspector, in the Blue Book published during the year, and of which, at the time, I made a note :—

“The progress of the Belfast school continues to be satisfactory, and it has identified itself with the manufacturers of the town to a degree which no other school has ever attained within the short period that has elapsed since its establishment. The manufacture of ‘linen bands’ and ‘headings’ has very greatly increased—probably threefold—since the establishment of the school, and the improvement of the quality of these articles in a still greater proportion is directly due to the pupils of this school. The embroidered waistcoat trade is also increasing, and the school has undoubtedly contributed to its advance.”

Of course, we have every reason to hope that each day these good results will be increased, that the circuit of its usefulness will be extended, and that in proportion to the means it possesses of prosecuting its objects, will be found the actual benefits

apparent from its influence. Already several branch schools in connexion with this have been established; teachers under the National Board have been admitted free of expense, in order that they may qualify themselves to give elementary instruction in turn to their scholars; and gradually we may hope that that refinement and feeling for beauty, which is well nigh the greatest gift a man can possess, will be in some measure generally diffused among all classes in this neighbourhood. Ladies and gentlemen, having, I trust, satisfactorily impressed upon you the practical and material advantages which are the undoubted consequences of the establishment amongst us of such institutions, I have the less hesitation in venturing to touch upon those, in my opinion, infinitely higher, nobler benefits, which would be consequent on a diffusion of such gracious influences amongst the people of any country. "*Didicisse fideliter artes emollet mores nec sinit esse ferus,*" is a well known quotation. To love what is good and take delight in what is beautiful are the greatest pleasures a human being can enjoy in this world. Beauty and holiness are twin sisters, once inhabitants of Paradise, but ever since the fall, out-cast wanderers on the face of the earth. To erect for them a throne within our hearts—to welcome them to our firesides—to seek them out amid the business and strife of the world, and turn aside and pay them adoration, is what has been granted to man, as the greatest help and comfort he can resort to during his troublesome journey through this world, until he reaches the happy and beautiful land where all things are made new; and enters through the gates of pearl into the city whose streets are paved with gold. But, unhappily, just as the dominion of sin has blinded our minds to the appreciation of what is good, and we find it difficult to discern the loveliness of charity and the nobleness of virtue and self-denial, so are our eyes and senses—the eyes of rich and poor, of educated and unlearned—but too often shut up to the majesty and loveliness of nature; and we go forth upon our way, and pass along the beautiful earth, and hear the rushing winds careering in triumph over its bosom, and see the golden clouds heaped up in domes and towers, and girded at the far horizon with flaming walls, like the distant ramparts of lost Paradise; but our faces are bent upon the ground, and we perceive not the glory and the good of these things, and we hurry

to the marts of men, and are very eager in our affairs; and we return to our homes weary and unsatisfied, little recking of the beautiful pictures nature has been painting for us, to win our love from this world—to remind us of the better world to come—and to speak to us the goodness of the great Being who, for the enjoyment of man, has hung the silent dome of heaven with lighted worlds, and called forth the lily on the face of the earth—more lovely in her purity than Solomon in all his glory, and the array and pomp of kings. Now, I cannot but think that it would be a great mistake to suppose that schools of art such as this, scattered up and down, are merely institutions for the purpose of teaching people to draw, and to design and decorate—or only that the land should be made splendid with beautiful buildings, and churches, and gorgeous palaces; or even that the ladies should be becomingly dressed—though these, and particularly the last, may be a very important part of their objects; but another—as real, as important, as useful—is, that they should diffuse among the people a capacity of deriving enjoyment from the contemplation of what is beautiful—that they should refine their minds, and render them sensitive to the thousand sights and sounds of loveliness which are perpetually thronging the face of the earth. In fact, that while the preacher from the pulpit is beseeching men to turn from the world, and the deceit of riches, and the pride of life, the apostle of art should bid them—for men must have something to delight in—to come with him, and behold and admire the glories of creation; and to the covetous man he gives the whole world for a possession—the clouds, and the mountains, and the plains; and for the ambitious man he builds a throne upon the rocks, and assigns him the ocean for his kingdom, and the waves for his councillors; and to the sensual man he points out the pure and tender-bending flower—and the weary and down-hearted he comforts with the gladsome sunshine, and the sweet singing of the birds—and the low-breathed tones of music, which is the language of another world. And so man becomes happier and more contented—and the little cottage, with its roses and ivy, becomes as beautiful as the mansions of the rich—and enjoyment is made independent of possession, and we are taught to feel that beauty does not depend on gorgeousness, and expensive and precious decoration, so much as on grace, and symmetry,

and harmony with the works of nature. And, ladies and gentlemen, to influences of this kind the people of this country would, I believe, be found peculiarly sensitive. We have our faults, great national faults of character—and I love my country too well to wish that they should be concealed, at all events, from ourselves. Ireland has ever been the favourite darling of misfortune—and, in their ignorance and misery, and the oppression to which they have been subject—among her children have sprung up many of the vices to which the poor, and the miserable, and the oppressed, are sorely tempted. But, from the earliest ages, in spite of ignorance and misfortune, in their passionate hearts—so loving, so generous, so truthful—those noble qualities have ever burned which, though they may not conduce to material prosperity, are, at all events, proofs of a less sordid spirit than that which characterises many another nation, wiser and more powerful than ourselves. It is true, we have remained poor and despised, and but little considered—hewers of wood and drawers of water—yet, already have we furnished to mankind names famous in the annals of the world—glorious poets and illustrious orators, valiant captains, cunning sculptors, and painters of the highest order; and reasonably may it be expected that, when the sunshine of better days lights up the land—whose dawn, I trust, we already see breaking over hill and dale—and ease and comfort and peace again come and revisit our people, that then happier arts, the crown of civilisation, will find in this island a genial home, and successful disciples in those that inhabit it. But, ladies and gentlemen, I feel that I have already trespassed too long upon your attention; and, therefore, I would beg your indulgence only for a few moments longer, while I venture to address a few words more particularly to the pupils of this Institution. Of course, it would be the highest presumption in me to speak dogmatically upon a subject with which I must, from circumstances, be imperfectly acquainted, and upon which many other gentlemen now present would be much more competent to address you; but, at the same time, there are one or two general remarks, upon the spirit in which your studies ought to be conducted, which, I trust, may not be entirely unworthy of your attention. The first point, then, which I would venture to impress upon your minds is, that in

the pursuit to which you have addressed yourselves, earnestness and industry are as necessary, if not more necessary, to insure success than in any other ; and it is the greatest folly to suppose that those qualities which Providence has ordained should be necessary to all excellence whatever become superfluous, or may be dispensed with, in those who devote themselves to the fine arts. *Nascitur non fit poeta* has, indeed, been said ; but it is a miserable perversion of the epigram to conclude that mere inspiration or genius is sufficient to produce a fine creation of any kind, whether of the pencil or the pen ; and no one was more convinced of this than the man who wrote it. If we turn to the lives of those great men whose works have been the wonder of succeeding generations, we shall find that the loftier the genius the more courageous was the patience, the more assiduous was the study with which it was cultivated. It is from Michael Angelo and Leonardo di Vinci that we shall learn upon what wings they are a great man soars to fame, and to what discipline a really great mind will submit. Never satisfied with their attainments, they were ever striving to reach a loftier height, and only won to what, in our opinion, at all events, is perfection, in consequence of a keen and painful consciousness of their deficiencies. To such an extent, indeed, was this feeling carried among the Greeks—the finest artists of any age—that their greatest sculptors, after they had brought their work to the most consummate finish which they were capable of giving to it, or it was capable of receiving, ever engraved upon its base—“Phidias, the Athenian—not *epoie*, has done this—but *epoiee*, was doing this ;” using the imperfect tense in order to shew that the author himself had a higher standard of perfection than what he had been enabled to realise. I have also heard an anecdote illustrating this superb feeling in the mind of the sculptor Thorwaldsen. Towards the close of his life, when his fame and reputation were at their height, a friend coming to congratulate him on the success of his later, as well as finest, works, found him in a state of great dejection. Anxiously inquiring the cause of this unusual sorrowfulness, the sculptor replied, that he felt his powers were failing—that the cunning of his hand was deserting him. “But,” rejoined his friend, “how can you suppose that, when your latest production is one of the

best and most perfect works you ever accomplished." "Sir," replied Thorwaldsen, "it is because I can find no fault in it, it is because I myself consider it perfect, that I feel assured my judgment and my discernment have quitted me, and my powers are failing." Such, then, gentlemen, is the untiring perseverance with which I would recommend you to pursue your endeavours after perfection; and you must not suppose that because I have cited the lives of great painters and sculptors to illustrate this principle, that, therefore, it is not applicable to that peculiar line of art in which you are engaged. I do not see any reason why any distinction should be made, at all events in the application of general principles, between the different modes of rendering and expressing the universal laws of beauty. The gradations are so delicate, that I am not wrong in seeking to include all those whose lives will be devoted to the study of them in one undivided brotherhood. Far from wishing to limit your exertions by any artificial boundaries which do not really exist, I would rather excite you to high and lofty aspirations. One of the principal characteristics of the times when the fine arts flourished most was that the workmen were artists, and the artists workmen; and it is always to be remembered that that man who was the greatest wonder of his own or any time, and has left behind him the most glorious monument of his talents—I mean the immortal Raphael—did not think it unbecoming his genius to devote the flower of his life to what was purely and simply ornamental and decorative work. Moreover, I would wish you particularly to pay attention to the advice given to you by the nobleman who addressed you in such admirable terms at the last general meeting of the friends of this Institution—advice which none was more competent to give than himself; and remember that there is no earthly reason why some of you who now hear me to-day may not hereafter become an honour to your country and the pride of your native place. And in order that you may see how undoubtedly that class in society to which yourselves principally belong have contributed more than any other to produce the most famous men that have ever enriched the world with their productions, I will read out a list of names I have jotted down, as they occurred to me, of those who, in spite of every disadvantage of birth and education, have at-

tained to the highest fame and reputation. First of all comes Giotto, the father of all painting, who was the son of a shepherd; then we have Salvator Rosa, the son of a land surveyor; Haydn, the great musical composer, the son of a wheelwright; Hogarth, apprentice to a silversmith; Claude Lorraine, apprentice to a pastry-cook; Rembrandt, son of a miller; Tintoretto, the son of a dyer; Stothard, son of a publican, and, subsequently, apprentice to a designer of brocaded silk; Guido's father was a music-master; Opie was the son of a carpenter; Canova was the son of a stonecutter; and, not to detain you longer, Quentin Matsys—whose example will, I am sure, have many admirers here—who, being a blacksmith, became a painter, all for the love of a young lady. So that you see, gentlemen, many labouring under far greater disadvantages than you have already successfully travelled the difficult path to the pinnacle of fame. The next point to which I would call your attention is, that in all your pursuits, in all your studies, you should look upon nature as your guide, and teacher, and counsellor. Study her ways—hammer out for yourselves the principles upon which she works—and do nothing that will not be in harmony with her operations. Authority is useful and wholesome, and you should not presumptuously violate its instructions; but, at the same time, nature over-rides all authority. Try everything, then, by that unfailing test—seek the good wherever it may be found—cling exclusively to no particular school, or doctrine, or sect, or style. Study the genius of the different nations that have possessed independent schools of art; but beware of those who, having no national genius of their own, disgraced and degraded the genius they imported from their neighbours. Venerate the Greek art, not because it is called classic, but because the Greeks were gifted with a finer and more exquisite sense of beauty than any other nation before or since; but beware of the Romans, a vulgar, ostentatious people, destitute of artistic genius themselves, and unable to appreciate the genius of any one else. But even to the Greeks surrender not your common sense and judgment. Remember how different are the circumstances and influences amid which you work to those which surrounded them. Like them, aim at an ideal; but better than them, breathe into it a living soul, which shall bring their Pagan beauty of form

into complete subordination to the dignity and majesty of a Christian spirit; and, above all things, beware of an immodest hankering after originality, and remember that although to be first in striking out a great idea may be a great glory, to be first to strike out a bad idea is as great a shame; and though fame may be desirable, obscurity ought to be preferred to disgrace. More fantastic follies have been perpetrated in a misdirected pursuit of originality, than from all the other vices of taste put together. I will give you one instance;—at a certain church in London—I forget the name of it—near the Dover Railway, however, some architect whose name, fortunately for his reputation, is lost to posterity, has left behind him an example of exquisite originality; for, not only had there never been an example of such an idea before, but, happily for the world, there has never been one since. This gentleman, it appears, had to build a church, which he constructed according to the principles then in vogue, on the model of a Grecian temple surmounted with a Gothic spire. But it appears that before one-third part of the spire was completed—either in consequence of his having a supernumerary column, which he did not know very well how to dispose of, or it having merited his displeasure—he was determined to be revenged upon it. The happy inspiration seized him that he would lift this column upon the base of the spire which he had already commenced, and which would thus give to the whole thing what, I dare say, he thought a pretty classic termination; and aloft there, consequently, for more than a century, has this unfortunate column been, as it were, mast-headed, the scoff and laughing-stock of all its neighbour columns comfortably located below, standing with its hands in its pockets, utterly idle and useless, with nothing whatever to support, except, perhaps, the indignity to which it has been subjected—the witness of what was, certainly, an original, but by no means happy inspiration. And, finally, gentlemen, I would say to you, who, as it were, aspire to be the high-priests of nature—interpreters between her and man, that you should strive to make yourselves worthy of the high office to which you are called. Providence has intended that that should be the business of your lives which to other men is a recreation and relief from the cares, and weariness, and annoyances of the world. The sun rises and man goes forth to his

labour until the evening, and pursueth his daily journey, and fighteth his daily battle, and campeth each night a step nearer to his home; and his life is full of restlessness and trouble; and the work appointed for him he can often find no pleasure in, because it is distasteful to his soul, and he longeth for the wings of a dove, that he may fly away and be at rest. And sometimes amidst the walls of the dusty city, and the monotonous occupation of his daily life, he dreams of the sparkling sea, that laughs along the golden sands, and he sees the mountains and the gleaming lake, and he hears the soft Summer breeze murmur through the dark woods, as he remembers it when in his youth, and the thought gives him fresh courage and refreshment, and he blesses the great power that made the world so beautiful, and returns to his appointed task with a braver and more contented heart. But with you, gentlemen, the case is far different; to you, nature has already stretched out her arms and taken you to her heart for ever; to live in the sunshine of her countenance, to be occupied in her business, to be building up monuments to her honour, and perpetually contemplating the glories of her handywork, is the allotted occupation of your lives. The restless world may spin on through shade and sunshine, and the tide of life whirl past in unceasing tumult, but neither its cares, nor vanities, nor temptations, can disturb the heart of him to whom nature has given an asylum within the quiet courts of her temple, who is occupied in her holy worship, and devotes his life to interpreting, for the sake of his less fortunate brethren, the mysteries of her love. Such, then, being the principles to which you are admitted, be careful that you may be worthy of them. Remember that for the perception of beauty it is as necessary to have a pure mind as it is to have an honest mind for the perception of truth. That as a man's conscience can be hardened and dulled by a sinful life, so that he can no longer distinguish between good and evil, so by an indulgence in mean, base, and earthly passions, whether of vanity, or pride, or lust, or ambition, his sensitiveness to the subtle influences of beauty will be deadened. The towers of the enchanted castle will fade back again into desolate rocks. It is only on a pure and unsullied mirror that unbroken reflection can be cast, and it is only by those that look upon her with simple, innocent minds that nature will reveal the secret of the world,

and enable them to render back the undistorted images of her beauty. When the enemy of mankind triumphed in Paradise, a glory faded from the creation, and the brightness both of the moral and physical world was dimmed. As ever since that time men have been conscious of a greater degree of happiness and goodness than they could find around them, so have the ministers of art in all ages been striving after a higher type of beauty than that which their daily lives presented; but rarely—very rarely—and only to those who strive after it with true faith, and sincerity, and devotion, has the curtain been for a moment lifted, and a fair glimpse been afforded of what men call the ideal, but which is only a dim shadow cast across the earth of the blessed reality of another world—whose glory and beauty eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive. (The Noble Lord was frequently cheered during the delivery of his address, and concluded amid the warmest and most enthusiastic applause.)

JAMES MACADAM, Jun., Esq., Honorary Secretary, then submitted the following as the Annual Report :—

“In again meeting the subscribers and friends of this Institution, the Committee have great pleasure in stating, that since they last laid before them their Annual Report, the School has continued to progress most favourably, and to manifest increased signs of practical utility.

“It is with deep regret that the Committee have to revert to the death of Mr. Thompson, one of the Vice-Presidents, who had, since its formation, been a most zealous friend to the School.

“The only change of moment in the management has been the appointment of Mr. Samuel Vance as Secretary, in the room of Mr. C. Bessel, whose resignation was accepted by the Committee in the month of April.

“In the Drawings of the pupils submitted for your inspection this evening, you will not fail to recognise many signs of improvement, especially from the pencil of those who entered the School in its first year, and who have now progressively gone through many of the different stages of the course of study prescribed in the programme of instruction drawn up by the Board of Trade for the guidance of its Schools of Design.

“Several of the more forward pupils have, from time to time,

made engagements with the manufacturers of damasks and sewed muslins, the printers of fabrics, the machine-makers, and other employers of the town and neighbourhood, whose business is connected with decorative art, or requires accuracy in outline drawing. As the demand for designers and drawers may be expected to become more general with the increase of a trained supply, the actual results of the instruction imparted in the School must each year be more sensibly apparent in the general improvement of taste, and the judicious introduction of novelties, in all our local manufactures which are indebted to ornament for their success.

"You are aware, that through the liberality of our Noble President, Lord Dufferin; of Mr. Houston, of Orangefield; of Mr. Henning, and of Messrs. J. G. M'Gee & Co., a number of prizes were given for designs in damasks, embroidered muslins and cambrics, linen ornaments and embroidered vests, and that the successful designs, as well as those furnished by some of the unsuccessful competitors, were of a highly creditable nature. In accordance with the wishes of the donors of these prizes, the designs and the fabrics to which they were applied formed part of the contribution from this town and province to the Great Exhibition in London, where they met with considerable praise from the Jurors, and attracted much attention among the visitors. The ten designs sent up by the School for exhibition were valued at £100. Prize Medals were awarded to Mr. Andrews, for damask; to Mr. Holden, for muslin; and to Messrs. J. G. M'Gee & Co., for embroidered vests; the designs furnished by the pupils forming a conspicuous portion of the articles for which these awards were made.

"While the School was thus a sharer in the honours of the Exhibition, that great museum of industrial art was made ancillary to the instruction of some of the pupils. Lord Dufferin, with his usual thoughtful kindness, placed at the Committee's disposal the handsome sum of £30 for this purpose, which being afterwards increased by other subscriptions, enabled the Committee to select and send to the Exhibition fifteen of the most meritorious students, who remained in London for nine days, during which time they applied themselves diligently to the study of the varied treasures of the Crystal Palace. In inspecting the triumphs of

High Art therein displayed, in examining the myriad forms where beauty has been made subservient to utility, and in contemplating the wonders achieved by the nations of the earth in fashioning the most varied materials into objects alike gratifying the eye and providing for the every-day wants of mankind, they have, doubtless, stored their minds with prolific ideas, and while admiring the perfection to which ornamentation has been carried, they have conceived a just estimate of the principles on which success has been based.

"The stimulus afforded by the special prizes formerly given has been sustained by others being proposed. Mr. Girdwood offered six guineas for the best coloured designs for chintzes, which the Committee, adding slightly to the amount, divided into prizes, gained by Anthony Stannus and James Williamson, and the more meritorious of the unsuccessful candidates were also awarded small sums by the Committee.

"For the purpose of preserving a permanent record of these competitions, and of forming a collection of designs, your Committee have arranged that either the original, or a copy of it made by the designer, shall in all such cases be retained; and they have succeeded in carrying out this plan retrospectively, being now in possession either of the originals or copies of all the Prize Designs since the opening of the School.

"Among the minor Designs produced, were some Drawings for part of the Testimonial presented by the Royal Flax Society to the Earl of Clarendon; and it was a source of much gratification to your Committee, that the School was thus, to a certain extent, identified with a mark of respect towards a nobleman, who, as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, took so prominent a part in the organisation of the Irish Schools of Design, and who continued to manifest so strong an interest in their success.

"In order to afford the Students an opportunity of copying from Nature, arrangements have been made by which twenty of their number have access to the Botanic Garden; and your Committee are at present in communication with the Council of the Natural History Society, relative to the admission of some of the more advanced pupils to the Museum, where various types of animal life, and more especially the shells and corals, are deserving of their study.

"Useful information on the history of Art, and illustrations of its particular phases, have been afforded to the pupils by the small but select library furnished by the Board of Trade, and the three public lectures delivered in April by Mr. Wornum, the lecturer appointed by that body, were well attended.

"The School was visited in December by Mr. Poynter, the Government Inspector, and by his recommendation, arrangements have been made for opening a public Morning Class three days in the week, to commence 1st April.

"At his suggestion, your Committee have offered free instruction to National School Teachers, and nine of them have already taken advantage of this permission. It is very important that sound instruction on Elementary Drawing should be disseminated through the National Schools, and this will be materially aided by the plan referred to. Drawing Classes are now being organised at Newtownards and Carrickfergus, under the guidance of some of our advanced pupils.

"Among the minor arrangements which have been carried out to provide for the health and comfort of the pupils, during the hours of study, are increased means of ventilation, and an abundant supply of water. Through the kindness of the Pipe-water Commissioners, the latter has been provided at a very moderate charge.

"It is with regret that your Committee cannot yet report anything further as to arrangements for erecting the Statue Gallery, which, in their last Report, they alluded to as absolutely necessary. The Government Inspector again called attention to this want on his last visit to the School, and stated that the Board of Trade was prepared to supply many additional casts, when a fitting place had been provided for their reception. A design has been furnished by Mr. Lanyon, for a building, 60 feet long by 30 feet wide, and 20 feet high, which would afford the requisite accommodation, and by an estimate afterwards obtained, it appears that the building could be erected and fitted up at a cost of £650. Several causes combined to induce your Committee to defer, until now, any decisive steps towards raising the necessary funds. They have received, unsolicited, from one or two liberal individuals, promises of substantial support, and they have no doubt that when they appeal to the public, the claims

of the School, and the necessity for a Statue Gallery, will be fully admitted and the amount raised. It was before stated, that the Boards of the Royal Academical Institution had kindly granted a site adjoining the School, so that it could at once be connected with the existing premises. Your Committee hope, therefore, that before they next meet you, the Statue Gallery will be ready for your inspection.

“ Having laid before you the chief topics of interest at present affecting the Belfast School of Design, your Committee have only further to advert, with much satisfaction, to the universal recognition of the importance of Art Education, which has, by degrees, resulted from an observation of its bearings upon a wide range of manufactures, and which has been hastened by the unique opportunity afforded by the Great Exhibition to some millions of all classes of persons, of comparing the products of those manufactures from countries where the greatest attention to Decorative Art has been given. The Schools of Design founded by our Government are calculated to afford every requisite instruction, and in the present favourable position of affairs, and with the minds of the nation aroused to the importance of Art Instruction, the Schools of Design throughout the United Kingdom may be expected to put forth increased efforts, and to vie with each other in practical utility. The high promise already held out by the Belfast School may fairly warrant us in hoping, that it will continue to occupy an honourable place, and that much permanent good may be effected by the labours of its talented masters.”

LORD BELEAST had much pleasure in moving the adoption of the report. Having taken a part in their proceedings last year, he felt considerable interest in the Belfast School of Design, and he trusted that the progress of the pupils would still go on increasing, as it had increased during the past year. (Applause.)

CHARLES LANYON, Esq., seconded the motion.

CONWAY R. DOBBS, Esq., moved the second resolution, He believed that the only reason why he had been called on to move that resolution was, because he had never before taken any part whatever in the conduct or management of their Institution. (Laughter.) He concluded by moving that the thanks of the meeting be given to the President, Vice-President, and Committee, for their very valuable services during the past year.

JOHN TAYLOR, Esq., seconded the motion.

The Lord Bishop of DOWN then moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Nursey, and Mr. Raimbach, for their services to the Institution during the past year. The efficiency and usefulness of such schools very much depended upon the conduct and ability of the masters; and, in the present case, it was almost impossible for them to estimate too highly the services of Mr. Nursey and Mr. Raimbach. The Belfast School of Design was conducted in an excellent manner; and he was glad to perceive, from Lord Dufferin's address, that it was very liberally supported by the people of this town. He was tolerably well acquainted with the inhabitants of Belfast, and he had often seen them exhibit a liberal and benevolent spirit; but he candidly confessed he was not prepared to admit that they would give their money without good reason. (Laughter and applause.) In support of the School of Design, they had put their hands into their pockets, and given twice as much as some, and even thrice as much as other, places had done, and he believed they had done so on very good grounds. His Lordship concluded, amid applause, by moving the vote of thanks.

WILLIAM VERNER, Esq., seconded the motion.

R. B. B. HOUSTON, Esq., moved the list of Office-bearers for the ensuing year.

JOHN F. FERGUSON, Esq., seconded the motion.

LORD DUFFERIN then said it became his pleasant duty to present the prizes to the pupils.

Dr. M'GEE then, after a few complimentary remarks upon the conduct of Lord Dufferin, introduced to the meeting Mr. James Williamson, one of the successful pupils, who had a few words to say to his Lordship.

Mr. WILLIAMSON then came forward, and, in the name of himself and his fellow-pupils, returned thanks to Lord Dufferin for the great interest he had taken in the school, and the pecuniary support he had given it. He concluded by presenting to his Lordship the model of a group of figures to be executed in silver, as a watch stand.

LORD DUFFERIN acknowledged the compliment, assured the pupils of the school that he felt much pleasure in witnessing the rapid progress they had made, and expressed a hope that they

would still go on progressing. If he deserved any merit for the aid he had given to the school, he was amply repaid in seeing the great proficiency which the pupils had so creditably attained in their education. The only motive he had in view was that which every man should have—namely, to be able to serve his country. (Applause.)

His LORDSHIP then announced that Lord Belfast and Mr. Mulholland had kindly promised to give £5 each to found an additional annual scholarship.

Lord Dufferin was then moved from the Chair, and Lord Belfast was called thereto.

W. J. C. ALLEN, Esq., moved a vote of thanks to Lord Dufferin, for his kindness on taking the Chair on that occasion, and the great interest he had manifested on behalf of the Institution.

The Lord Bishop of Down seconded the motion, which, on being put from the Chair, was carried with acclamation.

The Noble CHAIRMAN then announced that refreshments were ready in the adjoining room, and such as wished might partake of them.

The ladies and gentlemen continued to promenade through the extensive suite of apartments until after eleven o'clock, when the assemblage broke up. The band of the 91st Regiment performed a choice selection of pieces.

APPENDIX.

PRIZES DISTRIBUTED IN 1851-2.

CLASS OF DESIGNERS FOR DAMASK, SEWED MUSLIN, AND LINEN ORNAMENTS.

Design for Centre and Corner of Damask Table Cover.—1st prize, Alexander Wardlow, £4; 2d do. Anthony Stannus, £3.

Design for Sewed Muslin Handkerchief.—1st prize, Mathew L. Hewitt, £2; 2d do. John M'Cormack, 10s.

Design for Linen Bands.—1st prize, Samuel M'Cloy, £1: 10s.; 2d do. John M'Henry, £1; 3d do. Edward Reid (equal), £1.

For the best Drawing of Flowers from Nature in flat tints.—Mathew L. Hewitt, £1.

For the best Drawing of a Single Plant done in four ways.—J. M'Henry, £1.

CLASS OF PAINTERS, DECORATORS, &c.

Best Painting in Oil Composition, still life, Ebenezer Crawford, £4. Best Oil Painting from figure or cast, Anthony Stannus and Ebenezer Crawford (equal), £1: 10s. each. Best Shaded Chalk Drawing from figure, James Hamill, £2. Best Shaded Drawing of Ornament from the cast.—1st prize, Samuel M'Cloy, £1; Anthony Stannus and Ebenezer Crawford (equal), 10s. each.

CLASS OF CARVERS AND MODELLERS.

Best Model, in Clay, from the figure.—1st prize, James Williamson, £3; 2d do. Thomas Fitzpatrick, £1. Best Model, in Clay, from ornament, Henry Brown and William Fitzpatrick (equal), £1 each.

GOVERNESS CLASS.

First best Outline from the flat.—1st prize, Miss Tobias, books; 2d do. Miss Johnson, books; best Oil Painting, Miss Browne, books. Shading from the flat.—1st prize, Miss M'Clune, books; 2d do. Miss M'Gachy, books.

ELEMENTARY CLASS.

Best Outline of the figure from the round, James Williamson, £1. Best Outline Drawing of the figure from the flat, John Anderson, £1. Best Outline Drawing of Ornament, James Beggs, £1. Best Set of Perspective Diagrams, Robert Lawton, £1. Best Set of Geometrical Diagrams, Thomas Topping, 10s.

FEMALE CLASS.

Best Drawing of Flowers from Nature, Miss Fanny Briggs, £1. Best Outline Drawing of the Figure from the flat, Miss Mary Tarbett and Miss Cristiana Page (equal), 10s. each. Best Outline Drawing of Ornament or Flowers, 1st prize, Miss Fanny Briggs, 10s.; 2d do. Miss Martha Brown, 5s.

PRIVATE CLASSES.

John Aickin, best Drawing from the flat; John M'Henry, best Painting in Water Colours; J. F. Wallace, 2d best Shaded Drawing from the flat; Moses Staunton, best Outline of Foliage from the flat; A. T. Jackson, best Outline Drawing of the Figure; M. L. Hewitt, best Shaded Drawing from the flat; M. L. Hewitt, best Water Colour Drawing of Flowers; E. Crawford, best Painting in Oil; J. S. Stevenson, 3d best Shaded Drawing from the flat.

SCHOLARSHIPS.

1st Scholar, James Williamson, £20; 2d Scholar, Ebenezer Crawford, £15; 3d Scholar, James Hamill, £10.

Best Design for private class Card.—Anthony Stannus, 5s.; 2d do. Samuel M'Cloy, 2s. 6d.

PRIZES GIVEN BY MR. GIRDWOOD FOR PRINTED CHINTZ.

Design for an Eight-block Printed Chintz, Anthony Stannus, £3: 3s.; do. for a Three-block Printed Chintz, James Williamson, £2: 2s.

EXTRA PRIZES GIVEN BY COMMITTEE.

Design for Chintz, Samuel M'Cloy, £1: 10s.; do. Jas. Williamson, £1: 1s.; do. Ebenezer Crawford, £1: 1s.; do. Charles M'D. Clarke, 10s. 6d.

AGES OF MALE PUPILS.

Under 15,	102	Brought forward,	245
Above 15 and under 20,	104	Above 25 and under 30,	16
" 20 " 25,	39	" 30 " 35,	6
Carry forward,	245	TOTAL,	267

AGES OF FEMALE PUPILS.

Under 15,	14	Brought forward,	27
Above 15 and under 20,	13	Above 20 and under 25,	2
Carry forward,	27	TOTAL,	29

OCCUPATIONS OF MALE PUPILS.

Bleacher,	1	Brought forward,	105
Blockcutter,	1	Linen Trade, in the	4
Bookbinder,	1	Lithographic Writers,	3
Book-keeper,	1	Lithographic Printers,	2
Cabinet-makers,	2	Mariner,	1
Carpenters,	5	Muslin Trade, in the	2
Clerks,	23	Painters,	10
Coach-painter,	1	Plasterers,	2
Constabulary,	1	Printers,	2
Counter of Yarn,	1	Provision Trade, in the	1
Designers and Apprentice do.,	14	Schoolboys,	74
Die Sinker,	1	Sewed Muslin Trade, in the	19
Distiller,	1	Shipbuilder,	1
Drapers,	8	Shoemaker,	1
Draughtsman,	1	Smith,	1
Dyer,	1	Spinner,	2
Engineers, Millwrights, &c.,	21	Stationer,	1
Engravers,	10	Stone and Marble Carvers,	4
Engraver on Glass,	1	Stone-cutters and Masons,	8
Founder,	1	Surgeon,	1
Gardeners,	2	Surveyor,	2
Glassblower,	1	Teachers,	2
Grocer,	1	Unascertained,	3
Hacklemaker,	1	Undetermined,	5
Hair-dresser,	1	Watchmakers,	2
Japanner,	1	Weavers,	5
Jeweller,	1	Wood-carvers,	4
Linen-lapper,	1	TOTAL,	267
Carry forward,	105		

OCCUPATIONS OF FEMALE PUPILS.

Milliner,	1	Brought forward,	25
No Occupation,	10	Teachers,	2
Schoolgirls,	14	Undetermined,	2
Carry forward,	25	TOTAL,	29

GOVERNESS CLASS, 33

TREASURER OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF DESIGN AT BELFAST.

Abstract of Account from 1st January, 1851, till 1st April, 1852.

Dr.

Jan. 1, 1851.—To Balance in hands...	..	£132	4	1
Apr. 1, 1852.—“ Government Grant,— $\frac{3}{4}$ at £500 per Year, ..	£125	0	0	
$\frac{1}{4}$ at 600 “ ..	450	0	0	
“ “ Fees from Pupils, 14 year, ..	575	0	0	
“ “ Subscriptions for one year... ..	195	1	5	
“ “ Balance Subscription,—Pupils to London, ..	193	13	8	
“ “ Conversazione, 1851, ..	11	2	2	
“ “ ..	29	7	8	

Apr. 1, 1852.—To Balance in Treasurer's hands,	£136	9	0
..	£15	9	11

Cr.

April 1, 1852.—By One Year's Salary,—Mr. Nursey, ..	£300	0	0
“ “ “ “ Mr. Rainbach, ..	143	15	0
“ “ Mr. Bessel, till 1st May, ..	29	4	4
“ “ Mr. Vance, till 1st November, ..	20	0	0
“ “ One Year's Rent... ..	100	0	0
“ “ Getting in Water, £6: 10s.; Tax, £1: 13s. 4d.	8	3	4
“ Insurance, £1: 18s. 4d.; Gas, £33: 1s. 10d.	35	0	2
“ Carpenter, £14: 0s. 2d.; Glass, £3: 10s.	17	10	2
“ Porters, Coals, and Petty Expenses, ..	89	8	5
“ Painting, £28: 19s.; Builders, £69: 18s. 2d.	98	17	2
“ Advertising and Stationery, ..	32	8	1
“ Prizes, 1851 and 1852, ..	131	8	0
“ Conversazione, 1851, ..	35	15	5
“ Pupils do., 1851, ..	5	0	0
“ Oil Picture, ..	7	7	0
“ Scholarships, 1851, ..	33	15	0
“ Pupils to London, ..	13	7	0
“ Balance on hands, ..	15	9	11
	£1,136	9	0

Examined,—SAMUEL VANCE.

